

**University of Arkansas at Little Rock**  
Department of Political Science  
Fall 2010  
Online

**Professor Rebecca Glazier**  
Stabler Hall 603K  
Office Hours: M 11:00-12:00, 2:00-3:00  
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## **POLS 2301-991 Introduction to Political Science**

### Course Syllabus



**Description:** This course introduces students to the four main subfields of political science: political theory, American politics, comparative politics, and international relations. In studying these subfields we will address questions about the nature of government in the United States and around the world, the peaceful and conflictual relations among states, and the potential for change in both domestic and international systems.

**Course goals:** In this course, students are expected to gain substantive knowledge about politics through the study of facts and cases, as well as to gain transferrable skills. At the end of this course, students should be able to compare and evaluate regime types, government structures, and international organizations, and to identify the incentives and philosophies underlying the political behaviors of individuals and states. Students will also improve their writing and researching skills, use logic and evidence to build and/or question arguments, and gain experience working in groups, conducting negotiations, and presenting complex information.

#### **Required readings:**

- Power & Choice: An Introduction to Political Science, 12th Edition. W. Phillips Shively, McGraw-Hill, 2010
- Taking Sides: Clashing Views on Political Issues, 17th Edition. George McKenna, Stanley Feingold, McGraw-Hill, 2010
- Major daily news source
- Other readings posted online

**Course assignments and grading standards:** Letter grades will be based on the traditional scale (90-100 is an A, 80-89 is a B, 70-79 is a C, 60-69 is a D, and below 60 is an F). There will be no opportunities for extra credit. Course assignments and their percentage of the total grade are as follows:

- Participation, including pop quizzes: 10%
- Midterm: 15%
- Satire Assignment: 5%
- Online Discussion Leader Assignment: 10%
- Paper: 20%
- Final: 30%

**Expectations:** Students are expected to have the assigned readings completed each week, to regularly (i.e.: multiple times per week) participate in online class discussions, activities, and simulations, to complete and hand in assignments on time, and to ask questions. Students are expected to be respectful in their interactions with the professor and with their fellow students.

**Class format:** Just in case you aren't aware, this is an online course. There are many good things about being able to take a course online, but it does require you to work a little harder. I want to be as clear as possible up front: this is a challenging course. You have to be very disciplined in order to keep up with the readings and lecture materials. If you fall even one week behind, it is unlikely that you will do well in the class. May I suggest that you set a schedule for working on this course and be prepared to devote at least as much time to it as you would a class that physically meets a few times a week. Although we don't have a scheduled meeting time, I will post the material for the week, including lecture notes, PowerPoint slides, website links, and discussion questions by Monday morning of each week. You should make time to check our course website on Blackboard every Monday to access these materials and plan time to review them and participate in online discussions. This should NOT be the only time you check into the course website. I recommend visiting the site 3-5 times each week (more if you need to come back to download a reading, check a policy, etc). This is important because there will be at least 2 discussion threads ongoing at all times and students are expected to regularly contribute substantive comments. This is how you earn participation points, which make up 10% of your total grade for the course. To find out more about how discussion will work in this course, please check out the "Guide to Online Discussion in POLS 2301" posted on Blackboard.

**Communication:** Maintaining good communication is especially important in an online course. You must have reliable Internet access to take this course. I do not accept excuses for not taking exams, not participating in discussion, or not knowing the material or policies if they are based on insufficient Internet access or your failure to read the policies that are available to you online. You will need to check Blackboard regularly for course assignments, updates, and feedback. Any major announcements will be made through the announcements feature on Blackboard.

**Email policy:**

The best way to get a hold of me is through email. If you want to receive a reply, please make sure to 1) put a reasonably informative subject in the subject line, 2) address the email to Dr. or Professor Glazier, and 3) close with your name. Please feel free to ask me any questions about the course, but out of courtesy please check the syllabus and the course website to see if the

answer is already available. If you want to make any special arrangements or for any reason want me to remember something, please send it in an email. If I don't have it in email, it never happened.

**Exam format:**

All exams will be administered online through Blackboard. The exams will be closed book and closed note, timed exams. Questions will be presented one at a time and you will not be able to revisit past questions. Under no circumstances should students cut and paste material from the Internet or take direct statements from the textbook or lecture notes in answering essay questions for these exams. Doing so is cheating and students will be punished according to the cheating policy describe below. The exams are timed and only available during the scheduled window (listed in the schedule below). If you anticipate being unable to take the exam during the scheduled time, be sure that you are familiar with the make-up exam policy listed below. We will also have periodic “pop quizzes” in this course. The point of the pop quizzes is to make sure you are keeping up with the reading and checking in with Blackboard regularly. The pop quizzes will be a surprise (hence the “pop” in the name) and cannot be made up. Each one will be available for 72 hours. If you don't check Blackboard for 72 hours and miss a pop quiz, you are out of luck for that quiz, but hopefully you will check back more regularly in the future. I promise not to surprise you with pop quizzes on the weekend. There is a practice quiz available on Blackboard now. You should take it so that you are familiar with the way quizzes work on Blackboard. The practice quiz is worth 2 bonus points, which will be added to your first quiz score.

**Missed exams:** The exam dates are indicated in the class schedule and your paper due date will be assigned to you shortly (keep an eye out for the “Research Paper Topics Chosen and Assigned” document). If this class does not fit into your schedule, then you should consider taking it at a later date. No make-up exams will be given except in cases of serious, documented emergencies. The documentation must have contact information that allows me to call and verify your story. Vacations, birthdays, or hangovers do not qualify as emergencies. Note that what qualifies as a valid excuse is at the discretion of the instructor, so you should make arrangements in advance if at all possible. Failure to comply with this requirement will lead to an “F” for the exam. Students taking a make-up exam will not be given the same exam assigned to the rest of the class, and the format of the make-up exams may vary.

**Paper submission:**

The research paper must be submitted through Blackboard using the Safe Assign tool on the homepage of the course Blackboard site. **Every student will have a different paper due date, depending on the topic you select.** Please read the “Research Paper Assignment” and the “Online Discussion Leader Assignment” documents very carefully. You will have a chance to select your topic—and your paper due date—at the beginning of the course. Look for the “Research Paper and Discussion Topic Selection” discussion thread on Blackboard. All papers will be run through plagiarism screening software, which will compare the material used to online sources, library books, and papers submitted by other students. Plagiarism will not be tolerated and will be reported to the Dean of Students. Please read the plagiarism handout very carefully, as well as the cheating policy described below. Plagiarism excuses that are based in ignorance are not acceptable. Read the plagiarism policy. Late papers will be docked 1/3 letter grade for each day they are late. If a paper is 10 days late or more, it will not be read and will

automatically receive an “F.” A “practice paper” submission is currently set up on the course Blackboard page. You should submit any past research paper (really, any paper at all will work, but a research paper is best) using the Safe Assign tool to make sure you are familiar with it. Submitting a practice paper is worth 2 bonus points, which will be added to your online discussion leader assignment score.

**Cheating policy:** Academic dishonesty is taken very seriously in this course. Academic dishonesty includes but is not limited to, cheating on an exam, unauthorized collaboration on an assignment, and plagiarism. The professor is REQUIRED to report any academic dishonesty to the Dean of Students, and students caught cheating will receive an F for the assignment and may receive an F for the course. In order to ensure that you understand what constitutes plagiarism and academic dishonesty, please thoroughly review the plagiarism handout provided and read the complete description of the UALR policy on academic dishonesty, which is available in the student handbook at [www.ualr.edu/www/handbook/student\\_rights.html](http://www.ualr.edu/www/handbook/student_rights.html). Claiming to not know the definition of plagiarism is not an excuse for plagiarism.

**Disability statement:** It is the policy and practice of the University of Arkansas at Little Rock to create inclusive learning environments. If there are aspects of the instruction or design of this course that result in barriers to your inclusion or to accurate assessment of achievement—such as time-limited exams, inaccessible web content, or the use of non-captioned videos—please notify the instructor as soon as possible. Students should contact the Disability Resource Center, telephone 501-569-3143 (v/tty), in order to set up accommodations at least 2 weeks before the exam or assignment for which they are seeking accommodation. For more information, visit the DRC website at [www.ualr.edu/disability](http://www.ualr.edu/disability).

**Contested grades:** If you believe a grade is inaccurate, you must wait at least 24 hours before coming to speak with the professor. If there is a math mistake or an overlooked answer, please let me know and I will correct it. However, if you are actually contesting your grade, you must write a letter that explains why you believe a mistake in grading was made. Grades on exams or papers can only be contested within two weeks of when they are handed back. Course grades can only be contested within 60 days of the end of the quarter.

### **Schedule and Reading Assignments:**

#### *Week One: Introduction*

Readings: Shively Chapter 1; Shively Appendix, pp. 436-443; Online Article “An Introduction to Satire”

#### *Week Two: Political Theory*

Readings: Shively Chapter 2; Online Article “Marxists Apartment a Microchasm of Why Marxism Failed”

#### *Week Three: The State System and State Policies*

Readings: Shively Chapter 3; Online Article “Bill of Rights Pared Down to a Manageable Six”; Shively Chapter 4; Taking Sides Issue 14: Is Bigger Government Better Government?

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### *Week Four: Framing and Agenda Setting*

Readings: Online Articles, “Simple Framing”; “How to Speak Republican” and “Powerful Special Interest Group Momentarily Blanks on its Agenda”; Taking Sides Issue 15: Stopping Illegal Immigration: Should Border Security Come First?

### *Week Five: Economics*

Readings: Shively Chapter 5; Online Articles “Nation's Poorest 1% Now Controls Two-Thirds of U.S. Soda Can Wealth”; “Our Inequality Anxiety”; Taking Sides Issue 12: Is America Becoming More Unequal?

### *Week Six: Rational Choice*

Readings: Selections from “Thinking Strategically”; Taking Sides Issue 19. Is the Use of Torture Against Terrorist Suspects Ever Justified?

**Midterm Exam available Friday, October 1<sup>st</sup> at 8:00 am through Sunday, October 3<sup>rd</sup> at 11:59 pm.**

### *Week Seven: Regime Type*

Readings: Shively Chapter 7; Online Articles “Rebels Immediately Regret Seizing Power in Zambia”, “The Dictator’s Handbook”; Taking Sides Issue 2: Is Democracy the Answer to Global Terrorism?

### *Week Eight: The Citizen and the State*

Readings: Shively Chapter 8; Online Article “American People Ruled Unfit to Govern” Online Article “Iraqi Constitution Ratified, Burned”; Taking Sides Issue 21: Should the US pull out of Afghanistan?

### *Week Nine: Voting and Elections*

Readings: Shively Chapter 9; Shively Chapter 10; Online Article “Huge Democracy Geek Even Votes in Primaries”; “Obama Revises Campaign Promise of Change”; “Scratch ‘n Win Ballots Debut”; “Is Voting for Young People?”

### *Week Ten: Political Parties and Interest groups*

Readings: Shively Chapter 11; Shively Chapter 12; Online Article “Citizens Form Massive Special Disinterest Group”; Taking Sides Issue 16: Should There Be a Wall of Separation between Church and State?

### *Week Eleven: Social movements*

Readings: Shively Chapter 13; “Iran, Facebook, and the Limits of Online Activism”; Iran Documentary

### *Week Twelve: The Media*

Readings: Online article, “New Media as Election Strategy: How Obama and McCain Court the Net Generation”; Selections from News War Documentary

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### *Week Thirteen: Parliamentary vs. Presidential Government*

Readings: Shively Chapters 14 and 15; Taking Sides Issue 6: Is Congress a Broken Branch?

### *Week Fourteen: Foreign Policy*

Readings: Online article “The Seven Sins of American Foreign Policy”; to-be-determined current event reading posted online

### *Week Fifteen: International Relations*

Readings: Shively Chapter 18; Online article “The International System is not all Gloom and Doom”

**Final Exam available from Friday, December 10<sup>th</sup> at 8:00 am through Sunday, December 12<sup>th</sup> at 11:59 pm**